

our Nation's Southeast flank, and have given us the ability to protect our national interests throughout the hemisphere. On the threshold of the 21st century, the United States relies ever more on Florida's strengths in education and technology, assets that have already launched us into a new frontier.

As Commander Steve Oswald told our Florida congressional delegation this morning while orbiting the Earth in Space Shuttle *Endeavor*, "Every time Americans have left the planet to explore space, they have done so from Florida."

The greatest testament to Florida's excellence comes from the tens of thousands of people each year who choose to make our State their homes. Whether by birth or by choice, Floridians are a proud people who have contributed greatly to the history of our Nation. Twenty-two sons of Florida have won the Nation's highest award for bravery, the Congressional Medal of Honor, for protecting our country's freedoms. Here in the Nation's Capital, 96 Floridians have served our State and our Nation in the House of Representatives, and 30 have distinguished themselves through their service in the Senate. We salute our predecessors and the numerous other Floridians who have served in the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of the Federal Government.

From the white, sandy beaches and intercostal waterways of Pinellas County, the area which I have the privilege to represent, to the tropical Keys to the south, the rich pine forests to the north, and the excitement of the Kennedy Space Center on the east coast, after 150 years, the Sunshine State has become synonymous with great historic moments and diverse natural beauty. Florida's many diverse successes have transformed it into a gateway between North and South America, a bridge from the Earth to space, and a link connecting us to our future. With great pride, I salute the State of Florida on this historic day. May the sun always shine on its future.

SALUTE TO THE RHO CHAPTER OF ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY

HON. THOMAS M. FOGLIETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 3, 1995

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Rho chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity at Temple University in Philadelphia. The men of Rho chapter are celebrating their 80th year of fraternal service on March 31, 1995.

Alpha Phi Alpha, founded in 1906, is the Nation's first and oldest African-American Greek-letter organization. Alpha Phi Alpha was established for young men of African descent who were not allowed to join other Greek-letter organizations. Since its establishment, seven other African-American Greek organizations have been created, using Alpha Phi Alpha as a model.

Alpha Phi Alpha has over 100,000 initiated members in over 600 undergraduate and alumni chapters throughout the country 89 years later. Alpha Phi Alpha is the sponsor of many national programs which provide support to the United Negro College Fund, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, and March of

Dimes and many scholarship endeavors. Through their programs, the members of Alpha Phi Alpha have helped many less fortunate people in cities across the Nation. Some of the distinguished men who were part of this brotherhood include: the Honorable Thurgood Marshall, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Honorable David Dinkins, and Mr. Jesse Owens.

Rho chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha was founded on November 3, 1914, at Temple University. Rho chapter follows the format of the national chapter in format and purpose and has contributed a great deal to communities throughout the city of Philadelphia.

On this 80th anniversary of its establishment, I would like to recognize the Rho chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha for its accomplishments and contributions both to its members and to communities in Philadelphia and across the Nation. I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating President James G. Slaughter and the upstanding men of the Rho chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha on this great anniversary.

LEGISLATION REGARDING RETIREMENT PACKAGE FOR REVENUE OFFICERS

HON. RONALD D. COLEMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 3, 1995

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill which grants an early retirement package for revenue officers of the Internal Revenue Service, Customs Inspectors of the U.S. Customs Service, and immigration inspectors of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The legislation will amend the current law that grants retirement after 20 years to Federal law enforcement officers and firefighters, but does not include the groups mentioned above. Similar to currently covered law enforcement officers and firefighters, the employees to be covered under this bill have very hazardous, physically taxing occupations, and it is in the public's interest to ensure a vigorous work force in these positions.

Because my district is located on the United States-Mexico border, I know first hand the hardship and hazards that these employees endure on a daily basis. Most recently, drug smugglers have attempted to actually run over inspectors by speeding through our border crossings. Some Customs employees have lost their lives in the line of duty. These employees are confronted everyday with the criminal element. We must ensure that they receive adequate and competitive benefits so that we can continue to recruit the highest caliber people for these positions.

The need for a 20-year retirement benefit for inspectors of the Customs Service is easily apparent. These employees are the country's first line of defense against terrorism and the smuggling of illegal drugs at our borders. They have the authority to apprehend those engaged in such activities. They are responsible for the majority of arrests performed by Customs Service employees. These employees face multiple challenges. They confront leading criminals in the drug war, organized crime figures, and increasingly sophisticated white-collar criminals.

The physical demands of the Revenue officer job are evidenced by heavy workloads, and a high rate of job stress, resulting in a variety of physical and mental symptoms. The employees frequently use pseudonyms to hide their identity because of the large threat to their personal safety.

This legislation is cost effective. Any cost is more than offset by savings in training costs and increased revenue collection. A 20-year retirement bill for these employees will reduce turnover, increase yield, decrease employee recruitment and development costs, and enhance the retention of a well-trained and experienced work force.

It is imperative that we establish an effective Inspector and Revenue officer work force to ensure the integrity of our borders and proper collection of the taxes and duties due the Federal Government.

This bill, once enacted, will correct an oversight for these Federal employees. I ask the committee of jurisdiction to take up the legislation as rapidly as possible, and urge my colleagues to support it.

H.R. —

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM.

(a) TREATMENT AS LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.—Section 8331(20) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "administrative position," and inserting "administrative position, and any revenue officer, customs inspector, customs canine enforcement officer, and Immigration and Naturalization inspector."

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 8331 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking "and" at the end of paragraph (25);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (26) and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(27) 'revenue officer' means an employee of the Internal Revenue Service, the duties of whose position are primarily the collection of delinquent taxes and the securing of delinquent returns, including an employee engaged in this activity who is transferred to a supervisory or administrative position;

"(28) 'customs inspector' means an employee of the United States Customs Service, the duties of whose position are primarily to—

"(A) enforce laws and regulations governing the importing and exporting of merchandise;

"(B) process and control passengers and baggage;

"(C) interdict smuggled merchandise and contraband; and

"(D) apprehend (if warranted) persons involved in violations of customs laws, including an employee engaged in this activity who is transferred to a supervisory or administrative position;

"(29) 'customs canine enforcement officer' means an employee of the United States Customs Service, the duties of whose position are primarily to work directly with a dog in an effort to—

"(A) enforce laws and regulations governing the importing and exporting of merchandise;

"(B) process and control passengers and baggage;

"(C) interdict smuggled merchandise and contraband; and

"(D) apprehend (if warranted) persons involved in violations of customs laws,